

# **So, a charter school has come knocking on your door.....**

- **What do you do now?**

Adapted/updated from a presentation given by Dr. Carolyn Mauer to the Idaho School Boards Association in November, 2004

# The Goal is to have...

- **High quality charter schools**
  - faithful to the charter law
  - faithful to the charter
  - appropriately managing the public funds
  - able to demonstrate through clear evidence continued and high academic growth of the students.

# **You do have resources and places to go for guidance...**

- **Idaho Code- Title 33 Ch 52**
- **IDAPA 08.02.04**
- **Board Policy**
- **Experience of other school districts**
- **SBOE**
- **SDE**
- **ICSN**
- **NACSA**

# **First, let's put charter schools into the context of public education in Idaho -**

- **28 charter schools are operating in Idaho as of Sept, 2006**
- **14 school districts have authorized one or more charter schools**
- **8003 students in Idaho attended a public charter school in 2005-2006**
- **The demand exceeds the supply**
- **4 operating charter schools are either all or in part offering virtual distance education or education via on-line technologies**

# **Charter School Authorizers**

- **Local District Boards of Trustees**
- **The Idaho Charter School Commission**
- **The State Board of Education – on appeal**

# **Charter School Authorizers**

- **Although charter school authorizing is a relatively new role, it is pivotal**
  - **Guide the school development process**
  - **Keep the focus on results**
  - **Uphold the public trust**

# **Quality charter school authorizers should...**

- **Create an infrastructure and commit resources**
  - **Policies**
  - **Lines of authority**
  - **Knowledge**
- **Create an application process that is fair and consistent**
  - **Establishes a submission process**
  - **Timelines**
  - **Establishes evaluation process**

# **Quality charter school authorizers should require...**

- **The charter petition to meet all the requirements of Title 33 Ch 52 (this one is a must)**
- **Detailed business plan**
- **A three year operating budget**
- **Resumes and background checks for principals and authorized representatives**
- **Insurance binders**



# **Quality charter school authorizers should clearly establish...**

- **Through the charter or a contract, the rights and responsibilities of the district and the charter school**
- **Consequences**
- **The expected outcomes and the measures to be used to determine success or failure of the charter school**
- **Protocol for orderly closing of a charter school**

# **Charter Authorizers Oversight Responsibilities ...**

- **Evaluate performance**
  - Use multiple sources of data to determine the performance of the charter school
- **Monitor compliance**
- **Respect the charter school's authority over its day to day operations**

# **Charter Authorizers Oversight Responsibilities ...**

- **Provide clear and evidence-based notification of any problem**
- **Allow reasonable time for remediation**
- **Transparent decision-making**

# **What does Idaho law say...**

- **Charter schools may be new start-up schools**
  - Charter may be granted by any authorized chartering entity
- **Charter Schools may be a conversion of an existing district school**
  - Charter may only be granted by trustees

# **What does Idaho law say...**

- **Charter petitions must be submitted to local boards of trustees first who then may**
  - **Consider and approve**
  - **Consider and reject**
  - **Refer to the Commission**

# **Filing a Charter Petition**

- **Charter developers must incorporate as a non-profit corporation with the state of Idaho prior to filing a petition**
- **The petition should include the Articles of Incorporation and the By-Laws**

# **Filing a charter petition**

- **A petition must be reviewed by the Department for sufficiency prior to being submitted with the authorizing entity**
- **Insufficiencies in the charter petition should be corrected prior to submission**
- **The charter petitioner should supply the sufficiency review along with the amended petition**

# Filing a charter petition

- Petitions must be submitted to an authorized chartering entity no later than September 1 in order to open school the fall of the following school
- The flowchart of the process is on the Authorizing Charter Entity page at [www.sde.state.id.us/instruct/docs/charter/06/PetitionApprovalTimelinenew.pdf](http://www.sde.state.id.us/instruct/docs/charter/06/PetitionApprovalTimelinenew.pdf)



# **Considering the petition**

- **A board of trustees may**
  - 1. Approve a petition**
  - 2. Deny a petition, or**
  - 3. Refer a petition to the Commission for consideration**
    - **In all cases, the board must promptly provide written notice to petitioners of its decision**
    - **In the case of a referral, the board must also promptly forward the petition to the Commission**

# Considering the petition

- If the trustees and the petitioners have not reached mutual agreement on the provisions of the charter after a reasonable and good faith effort, according to the timeline in the law, then the petitioner may withdraw the petition and submit it to the Commission.

[IDAPA 08.02.04 SubSection 206.02](#)

# **What is a reasonable and good faith effort?**

- **State Board rule, IDAPA 08.02.04.206, states that “For the purposes of SubSection 206.02 of these rules, the parties shall be considered to have established a reasonable and good faith effort to reach mutual agreement on the provisions of the petition if representatives of the parties take at least all of the following actions: (4-11-06)**

## **IDAPA 08.02.04.206 continued -**

- a. The authorized chartering entity must send written notice to petitioners acknowledging receipt of the charter petition and the date of receipt. (4-11-06)**
- b. The authorized chartering entity posts public notice of a public hearing for the purpose of considering the petition, and such meeting is scheduled to occur not later than sixty (60) days after receipt of the petition and verification that there are thirty (30) signatures from qualified electors of the attendance area. (4-11-06)**

## **IDAPA 08.02.04.206 continued -**

- c. Prior to the date the posted public hearing is scheduled, representatives of the authorized chartering entity must conduct a review of the petition and the State Department of Education sufficiency review of the petition, and if immediate concerns with the petition are identified, then written notice must be sent to petitioners identifying the concerns and requesting that said identified concerns be addressed. In the event correspondence is sent to petitioners identifying concerns with the petition, then petitioners must respond in writing to the authorized chartering entity addressing the identified concerns.**

**(4-11-06)**

## **IDAPA 08.02.04.206 continued -**

- d. Either prior to or at the posted public hearing, representatives from both the authorized chartering entity and petitioners must meet and engage in face-to-face discussions regarding the charter petition.(4-11-06)**

# **A Charter School**

- **chartered by a local board of trustees is considered to be a school of the school district and is part of the LEA**
- **chartered by the Commission must be designated as an LEA**

# **A quality charter school is...**

- **A school characterized by**
  - **High student achievement**
  - **Financial stewardship**
  - **Responsible governance**



# **The Charter School “Bargain”**

- **The charter school has autonomy in exchange for accountability**
  - has operational autonomy
  - agrees to be held to high academic and organizational performance
- **Accountability is ensured by**
  - Parents and students who decide to enroll or stay
  - Authorizers who ensure the performance of the charter school lives up to the charter
  - State and federal requirements

# **As an authorizer how will you know?**

- The charter school must report to you annually on their fiscal and programmatic audits; how their students are doing academically according to the measurable educational goals identified in the charter; accreditation status**
- As an authorizer, you can require regular financial reports (monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly)**
- As an authorizer, visit the school and see it in operation**

# **The Goal**

- **To have charter schools that are**
  - **faithful to the charter law**
  - **faithful to the charter**
  - **appropriately managing the public funds**
  - **able to demonstrate through clear evidence continued and high academic growth of the students.**